



Department of
HEALTH and
HOSPITALS

Christopher May
SECRETARY



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOSPITALS
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

HEALTH ADVISORY FOR THE DEVIL'S SWAMP
AND BAYOU BATON ROUGE AREA

July 9, 1993

The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality are issuing the following health advisory for the Devil's Swamp and Bayou Baton Rouge areas of East Baton Rouge Parish. [The area of concern is bounded on the north by Hall Buck Marine Road, on the east by the bluffs and the Baton Rouge Barge Harbor and on the south and west by the Mississippi River.]

This advisory modifies a previous advisory in response to recent sampling and analysis of environmental data.

Water and sediment sampling and analyses south of the Petro Processors Superfund site indicate arsenic, lead, mercury, hexachlorobenzene (HCB) and hexachlorobutadiene (HCBD) contamination is present at levels that pose risks to public health. Therefore, the public is advised not to swim nor participate in other primary water contact sports in the area of concern.

Additionally, elevated levels of HCB, HCBD, and mercury have been found in some samples of fish from this area. Because of the levels of contamination, the agencies are advising that consumption of all fish species from these waters be limited to two (2) meals per month. A meal is considered to be one-half (1/2) pound of fish. Recommendations made in this advisory have taken into account individuals with special sensitivities such as children and pregnant women.

This advisory is based on samples taken from both Devil's Swamp and Bayou Baton Rouge. However, the area of concern extends beyond the sampled area. When additional data become available, the boundaries of the advisory will be adjusted, if necessary, to reflect the results of the new information.

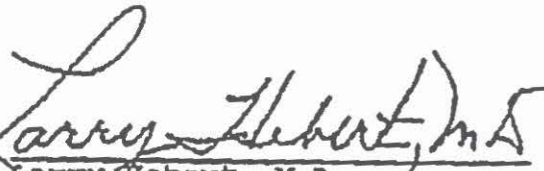
High consumption of food contaminated with these chemical residues over a long period of time may increase the risk of cancer or other diseases. The chemicals are usually more concentrated in the fat and skin.




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To reduce the risk of exposure to these chemical contaminants, you should trim the fat and skin from fish prior to cooking; bake, broil or grill, and then drain the fat; vary your diet by eating a variety of fish, seafood, meat and poultry from different sources.

For more information regarding this advisory, contact Emelise Cormier, DEQ-Water Resources at 504-765-0634, Tom Stafford, DEQ-Inactive and Abandoned Sites at 504-765-0487, or Jennifer Goodwin, DHH-Office of Public Health, 504-568-8537.


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